

## Recreation Survey of Swan Lake

Swan Lake is an extremely scenic lake, offering a fine rainbow trout sport fishery. The lake is located approximately two and one-half miles from the tidewaters of Thomas Bay. Aircraft is essentially the only means of access to Swan Lake, although a crude trail does lead from the outlet along Cascade Creek down to sea level. This trail is used only as an emergency exit from the lake in cases of prolonged periods of fog which would preclude departure by airplane.

Fine fishing, majestic scenery, goat hunting, prospecting, and close proximity to Petersburg make Swan Lake a popular place from spring thaw until freeze-up. Because the lake is 1520 feet above sea level, the lake is not usually free of ice until early July. Freeze-up occurs sometime in late October.

A U.S. Forest Service A-frame cabin, equipped with an outhouse, incinerator, and boat are present. The cabin has two bunks on the main level and a loft which would easily accomodate four or five people. The cabin is equipped with an oil stove.

The lake is situated in a deep canyon basin rimmed by peaks topping 5,000 feet. It is impossible to walk the shoreline of the lake as some portions of the shoreline are vertical walls. An outboard motor is not necessary due to the cabin's location in relation to the inlet area which offers the best fishing. Swan Lake has no native fish species. Several rainbow trout introductions have been quite successful and natural reproduction appears to be good.

Cascade Creek varies in width from about 10 to 80 feet with shallow riffles and pools, some as deep as 10 feet. The stream provides fair fishing, but the inlet shoals of the lake provide the best fishing. Fishing reports say fish to 4 pounds can be caught. In recent years the average size of fish has decreased. Now, fish over 2 pounds might be considered exceptional.

Swan Lake is in close proximity to Thomas Bay. The countryside surrounding Thomas Bay has long been of interest to people of Alaska because of strange stories brought back by prospectors. The "curses" talked about regarding the locality may be unfounded, yet some people from Petersburg and other communities of Southeast Alaska consider the region a place never to trespass upon.

Scenery Lake lies just on the other side of the ridge to the north of Swan Lake. The name is very appropriate. This spot is a starting point for hikers and climbers venturing into the high country. Devil's Thumb, an impressive granite spire over 9,000 feet high, is considered an extreme test for serious technical climbers.